

different methodology than that used for other market segments is employed to estimate used tire quantities. The preferred source of data is processor records of the specific tonnage shipped to domestic purchasers or exported. However, sometimes these are not available, usually because the facility operator provides only a rough estimate of the percentage of tires culled for reuse. In such cases, researchers apply a single industry average percentage estimate of the portion culled for reuse from all tire flows (excluding flows to facilities for which a processor has already provided specific tonnage of used tires culled). Finally, researchers then apply an estimate for the percentage of these used tires that is exported versus sold domestically. The specific percentages used are developed based on discussion with processors and haulers, and the quantity exported is validated to a degree based on U.S. Census data on exported used tires. In past years, processor-specific estimates were used for each facility, even when it was a rough percentage. And, the percentages used to estimate total and exported used tire quantities were based on anecdotal feedback from only a few firms. The authors believe this refined methodology is more accurate because it applies a single, industry-wide average culling estimate that takes into account activities throughout the chain from generator to processor; it recognizes that the flows of some processors may be more rich in used tires than others; and the percentage of used tire culling and the percent exported can be updated annually based on interviews with processors and haulers.

Conversion Factors

Following are some key notes regarding the use of conversion factors in this study.

- All calculations in the analysis are performed in tons, not PTEs. When the final analysis is complete, tons are then converted to PTEs using the standard definition of 20 pounds per PTE, and reported that way in this report, for consistency with past reports.¹⁶
- With the exception of retreaders, surveys request that flow data from companies be provided in tons, and it is nearly always provided that way. Retreaders report the number of different types of tires retreaded and are also asked to provide the average tire weight for each type. If not available, the average weight from other reporting companies is used. Occasionally, other facilities may provide flow data in terms of the number of tires, and the most accurate conversion factor available is used to convert to tons. For example, Caltrans' annual report to the Legislature and related documents report tire use in PTEs, defined as 20 pounds per tire or 12 pounds of crumb rubber per

¹⁶ This approach is based on direction provided by CalRecycle to the contractor team and is consistent with CalRecycle practices in a number of programs and policies. For example, the California Code of Regulations defines a PTE as 20 pounds (14 CCR § 17225.770).